



Media Release

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REGIONAL LEADERSHIP CALLS FOR MEETING WITH THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER REGARDING ONGOING FOREIGN INFRASTRUCTURE CONCERNS BORDERING THE TORRES STRAIT

On Tuesday (09/02/21), Cr. Phillemon Mosby, Mayor of the Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC), convened a forum with leaders from the Torres Shire Council (TSC), Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) and the Gur A Baradharaw Kod (GBK) Torres Strait Land & Sea Council, to discuss regional concerns about a proposed multi-billion-dollar plan by Chinese investors to build a new city on the Papua New Guinean island of Daru.



*Pictured (L-R): Mayor Phillemon Mosby (TSIRC), Mayor Vonda Malone (TSC),
Mr Napau Pedro Stephen (Chair, TSRA), and Mr Ned David (Chair, GBK).*

Daru Island is only 60-80km from several Torres Strait communities, separated by an international border. Traditional cross-border movements are managed through the Australia-PNG Torres Strait Treaty. Communities have grave concerns that such significant infrastructure and development could have a downstream impact on an already fragile environment, ecosystems and traditional ways of life.

News of a multi-function fishery development was announced for Daru in late 2020, which when paired with the newly leaked project, which encompasses an industrial zone, seaport, business and commercial zone, resort and significant residential area, would signify multi-billion-dollar foreign ownership within the region.

During the meeting, representatives called Australian Government's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Marise Payne to meet with regional leaders within the Torres Strait. While leaders respect PNG's sovereignty, the Torres Strait's regional interests also need to be considered by the Government. Leaders would welcome the opportunity to work together with Minister Payne and gain further transparency about these proposed projects and address the potential risks this could have to the outer island communities and wider Torres Strait region.

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